

A

LETTER

FROM A

CITIZEN and FREEHOLDER

OF THE

City and County of *H-r-f-d*,

TO HIS

REPRESENTATIVES in *Parliament*,

E--d H--y, and T--s F--y, Esquires.



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Gentlemen,

THIS will not, I hope, be receiv'd at all the worse for coming without a Number of Names (which might easily have been had) or even without any Name; since you are more concern'd to consider *What* is desired of You, than *Who* desires it. I shall not, therefore, make any Apology

logy for laying my Thoughts before You in this *less pompous* Way, presuming You will think it full as respectful as the Application You will receive from some others of my Fellow-Citizens and Freeholders, in which I could not join, for these Reasons :

First, BECAUSE I did not think the Words there used, *We insist and require*, quite decent towards You, or fit for a *Petition*; the Design of which is therein declar'd to be, to obtain a *Free Parliament*; which, surely, can no more be Free, if the Members are awed by their Constituents, than if they are influenced by any other Power.

Secondly, BECAUSE I thought that Petition liable to the Interpretation, as if either of You *had been influenc'd* by the Places Your Fathers held till the Time of their Deaths, or are *capable* of being influenc'd thereby, should You be put into any Yourselves, which the Bill petition'd for does not exclude You from.

Thirdly, BECAUSE it is my real Opinion, That Corruption does not lie so much in a Place, as in the *Circumstances, or Heart*, of the Person who possesseth it; and that a *Free Parliament* is more likely to be secur'd by the following Means, than by a Bill for *only limiting* the Number of Placemen in Parliament; which shews the Petitioners and my Opinion to be in great

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great Measure, if not entirely, the same in this Particular.

WHATEVER, therefore, You may think fit to do with respect to that Bill, yet I promise myself You will not fail to use Your Endeavours to obtain for us a *general Register for all Mortgages* throughout the Kingdom, which we so much expected the last Sessions, and to get *the Law against Bribery in Elections* extended to *Candidates*, as well as to the Electors. —

By the *former* of these we shall have an Opportunity of knowing *Who have Estates*, and *Who live within their Estates*, which is the best Rule of our Choice, and the best, if not the only, Remedy of Corruption within Doors; as such Men are less expos'd to it, than Men of broken Fortunes, deep in Debt, and overwhelmed with Mortgages; — And by the *latter*, all Temptation to Corruption in those who have a Right to elect will be cut off; since, if a Bribe may not be offered, there will be no Possibility of accepting it: And it will easily be allowed to be hard for poor Men to be put under an Oath not to receive a Bribe, whilst Gentlemen are left at Liberty to tempt them with one.

EITHER therefore let *the Oath in this Case be general*, for the Candidates as well as the Electors, or let it be abolish'd, and quite laid aside, that all the Perjury which this Law, standing as it now does, will probably

probably occasion, may not add an heavy Weight to the Sins of the Nation, and provoke GOD to destroy it; — And let a *Pecuniary Mulct*, with an utter *Disqualification to be chosen, or to vote in any future Election*, be established in its Room.

I am, **Gentlemen,** *Your Most Obedient, &c.*



Erinnyes, in Causa, non Causa.
Centrally placed on the crest is a small shield or emblem, possibly a coat of arms, which is partially obscured by the floral wreath.